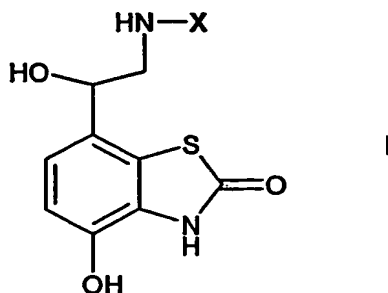


**CLAIMS****1. A compound of formula I**

in free or salt or solvate form, wherein

X is  $-R^1-Ar-R^2$  or  $-R^a-Y$ ;

Ar denotes a phenylene group optionally substituted by halo, hydroxy,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy- $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl, phenyl,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl substituted by phenyl,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy substituted by phenyl,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl-substituted phenyl or by  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy-substituted phenyl;

$R^1$  and  $R^2$  are attached to adjacent carbon atoms in Ar, and either  $R^1$  is  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkylene and  $R^2$  is hydrogen,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy or halogen or  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  together with the carbon atoms in Ar to which they are attached denote a 5-, 6- or 7-membered cycloaliphatic ring;

$R^a$  is a bond or  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkylene optionally substituted by hydroxy,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_6-C_{10}$ -aryl or  $C_7-C_{14}$ -aralkyl; and

Y is  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_2-C_{10}$ -alkenyl or  $C_2-C_{10}$ -alkynyl optionally substituted by halo, cyano, hydroxy,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy or halo- $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl;

$C_3-C_{10}$ -cycloalkyl optionally fused to one or more benzene rings and optionally substituted by  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_3-C_{10}$ -cycloalkyl,  $C_7-C_{14}$ -aralkyl,  $C_7-C_{14}$ -aralkyloxy or  $C_6-C_{10}$ -aryl, where  $C_3-C_{10}$ -cycloalkyl,  $C_7-C_{14}$ -aralkyl,  $C_7-C_{14}$ -aralkyloxy or  $C_6-C_{10}$ -aryl are optionally substituted by halo, hydroxy,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy or halo- $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl;

$C_6-C_{10}$ -aryl optionally substituted by halo, hydroxy,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -haloalkyl, phenoxy,  $C_1-C_{10}$ -alkylthio,  $C_6-C_{10}$ -aryl, 4- to 10- membered heterocyclic

ring having at least one ring nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur atom, or by  $\text{NR}^b\text{R}^c$  where  $\text{R}^b$  and  $\text{R}^c$  are each independently  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl optionally substituted by hydroxy,  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkoxy or phenyl or  $\text{R}^b$  may additionally be hydrogen;

phenoxy optionally substituted by  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl,  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkoxy or by phenyl optionally substituted by  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl or  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkoxy;

a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur atom, said heterocyclic ring being optionally substituted by halo,  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl,  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkoxy, halo- $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl,  $\text{C}_6\text{-C}_{10}$ -aryl,  $\text{C}_7\text{-C}_{14}$ -aralkyl,  $\text{C}_7\text{-C}_{14}$ -aralkyloxy,  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkoxycarbonyl or a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclyl- $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl;

$-\text{NR}^d\text{R}^e$  where  $\text{R}^d$  is hydrogen or  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl and  $\text{R}^e$  is  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl optionally substituted by hydroxy, or  $\text{R}^e$  is  $\text{C}_6\text{-C}_{10}$ -aryl optionally substituted by halo, or  $\text{R}^e$  is a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur atom which ring is optionally substituted by phenyl or halo-substituted phenyl or  $\text{R}^e$  is  $\text{C}_6\text{-C}_{10}$ -arylsulfonyl optionally substituted by  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkylamino or di( $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl)amino;

$-\text{SR}^f$  where  $\text{R}^f$  is  $\text{C}_6\text{-C}_{10}$ -aryl or  $\text{C}_7\text{-C}_{14}$ -aralkyl optionally substituted by halo,  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl,  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkoxy or  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -haloalkyl; or

$-\text{CONHR}^g$  where  $\text{R}^g$  is  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl,  $\text{C}_3\text{-C}_{10}$ -cycloalkyl or  $\text{C}_6\text{-C}_{10}$ -aryl.

2. A compound according to claim 1, in which

X is  $-\text{R}^1\text{-Ar-R}^2$  or  $-\text{R}^a\text{-Y}$ ;

Ar denotes a phenylene group optionally substituted by halo,  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl,  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkoxy or by  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkoxy substituted by phenyl;

$\text{R}^1$  and  $\text{R}^2$  are attached to adjacent carbon atoms in Ar, and

either  $\text{R}^1$  is  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkylene and  $\text{R}^2$  is hydrogen,

or  $\text{R}^1$  and  $\text{R}^2$  together with the carbon atoms in Ar to which they are attached denote a 5-, 6- or 7-membered cycloaliphatic ring;

$\text{R}^a$  is a bond or  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkylene optionally substituted by hydroxy,  $\text{C}_6\text{-C}_{10}$ -aryl or  $\text{C}_7\text{-C}_{14}$ -aralkyl; and

Y is  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl,  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkoxy or  $\text{C}_2\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkynyl;  $\text{C}_3\text{-C}_{10}$ -cycloalkyl optionally fused to one or more benzene rings and optionally substituted by  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10}$ -alkyl,  $\text{C}_3\text{-C}_{10}$ -cycloalkyl,  $\text{C}_7\text{-C}_{14}$ -

aralkyl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>14</sub>-aralkyloxy optionally substituted by halo, or by C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkoxy; C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl optionally substituted by halo, hydroxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, phenoxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkylthio, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl, a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen atom, or by NR<sup>b</sup>R<sup>c</sup> where R<sup>b</sup> and R<sup>c</sup> are each independently C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl optionally substituted by hydroxy or phenyl or R<sup>b</sup> may additionally be hydrogen; phenoxy optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkoxy; a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen or oxygen atom, said heterocyclic ring being optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>14</sub>-aralkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkoxycarbonyl or by a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclyl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl; -NR<sup>d</sup>R<sup>e</sup> where R<sup>d</sup> is hydrogen or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl and R<sup>e</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, or R<sup>e</sup> is a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen or oxygen atom which ring is optionally substituted by halo-substituted phenyl or R<sup>e</sup> is C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-arylsulfonyl optionally substituted by di(C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl)amino; -SR<sup>f</sup> where R<sup>f</sup> is C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>14</sub>-aralkyl optionally substituted by halo or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-haloalkyl; or -CONHR<sup>g</sup> where R<sup>g</sup> is C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-cycloalkyl or C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl.

3. A compound according to claim 2, in which

X is -R<sup>1</sup>-Ar-R<sup>2</sup> or -R<sup>a</sup>-Y;

Ar denotes a phenylene group optionally substituted by halo, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy or by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy substituted by phenyl;

R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> are attached to adjacent carbon atoms in Ar, and

either R<sup>1</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylene and R<sup>2</sup> is hydrogen,

or R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> together with the carbon atoms in Ar to which they are attached denote a 5-, 6- or 7-membered cycloaliphatic ring, especially a 5-membered cycloaliphatic ring;

R<sup>a</sup> is a bond or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylene optionally substituted by hydroxy, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aralkyl; and

Y is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy or C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkynyl; C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-cycloalkyl optionally fused to one or more benzene rings and optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aralkyl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aralkyloxy optionally substituted by halo, or by C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy; C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl optionally substituted by halo, hydroxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, phenoxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylthio, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl, a 4- to 8-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen atom, or by NR<sup>b</sup>R<sup>c</sup> where R<sup>b</sup> and R<sup>c</sup> are each independently C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl optionally substituted by hydroxy or phenyl or R<sup>b</sup> may additionally be hydrogen; phenoxy optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy; a 4- to 8-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen or oxygen atom, said heterocyclic ring being optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aralkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxycarbonyl or by a 4- to 8-membered heterocyclyl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl; -NR<sup>d</sup>R<sup>e</sup> where R<sup>d</sup> is hydrogen or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl and

$R^e$  is  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl, or  $R^e$  is a 4- to 8-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen or sulphur atom which ring is optionally substituted by halo-substituted phenyl or  $R^e$  is  $C_6$ - $C_8$ -arylsulfonyl optionally substituted by di( $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl)amino;  $-SR^f$  where  $R^f$  is  $C_6$ - $C_8$ -aryl or  $C_7$ - $C_{10}$ -aralkyl optionally substituted by halo or  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -haloalkyl; or  $-CONHR^g$  where  $R^g$  is  $C_3$ - $C_6$ -cycloalkyl or  $C_6$ - $C_8$ -aryl.

4. A compound according to claim 1 in free or salt or solvate form, wherein

X is  $-R^1$ -Ar- $R^2$  or  $-R^a$ -Y;

Ar denotes a phenylene group optionally substituted by halo, hydroxy,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy- $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl, phenyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl substituted by phenyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy substituted by phenyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl-substituted phenyl or by  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy-substituted phenyl;

$R^1$  and  $R^2$  are attached to adjacent carbon atoms in Ar, and

either  $R^1$  is  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkylene and  $R^2$  is hydrogen,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy or halogen or  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  together with the carbon atoms in Ar to which they are attached denote a 5-, 6- or 7-membered cycloaliphatic ring;

$R^a$  is a bond or  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkylene optionally substituted by hydroxy,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_6$ - $C_{10}$ -aryl or  $C_7$ - $C_{14}$ -aralkyl; and

Y is  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_2$ - $C_{10}$ -alkenyl or  $C_2$ - $C_{10}$ -alkynyl optionally substituted by halo, cyano, hydroxy,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy or halo- $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl;

$C_3$ - $C_{10}$ -cycloalkyl optionally fused to one or more benzene rings and optionally substituted by  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_3$ - $C_{10}$ -cycloalkyl,  $C_7$ - $C_{14}$ -aralkyl,  $C_7$ - $C_{14}$ -aralkyloxy or  $C_6$ - $C_{10}$ -aryl optionally substituted by halo, hydroxy,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy or halo- $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl;

$C_6$ - $C_{10}$ -aryl optionally substituted by halo, hydroxy,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -haloalkyl, phenoxy,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkylthio,  $C_6$ - $C_{10}$ -aryl, 4- to 10- membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur atom, or by  $NR^bR^c$  where  $R^b$  and  $R^c$  are each independently  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl optionally substituted by hydroxy,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy or phenyl or  $R^b$  may additionally be hydrogen;

phenoxy optionally substituted by  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy or by phenyl optionally substituted by  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl or  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy;

a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur atom, said heterocyclic ring being optionally substituted by halo,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxy, halo- $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl,  $C_6$ - $C_{10}$ -aryl,  $C_7$ - $C_{14}$ -aralkyl,  $C_7$ - $C_{14}$ -aralkyloxy,  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkoxycarbonyl or a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclyl- $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl;

$-NR^dR^e$  where  $R^d$  is hydrogen or  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl and  $R^e$  is  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$ -alkyl optionally substituted by hydroxy, or  $R^e$  is  $C_6$ - $C_{10}$ -aryl optionally substituted by halo, or  $R^e$  is a 4-

to 10-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur atom which ring is optionally substituted by phenyl or halo-substituted phenyl or R<sup>e</sup> is C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-arylsulfonyl optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkylamino or di(C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl)-amino;

-SR<sup>f</sup> where R<sup>f</sup> is C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>14</sub>-aralkyl optionally substituted by halo, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkoxy or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-haloalkyl; or

-CONHR<sup>g</sup> where R<sup>g</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-cycloalkyl or C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl.

5. A compound according to claim 4, in which

X is -R<sup>1</sup>-Ar-R<sup>2</sup> or -R<sup>a</sup>-Y;

Ar denotes a phenylene group optionally substituted by halo, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkoxy or by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkoxy substituted by phenyl;

R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> are attached to adjacent carbon atoms in Ar, and

either R<sup>1</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkylene and R<sup>2</sup> is hydrogen,

or R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> together with the carbon atoms in Ar to which they are attached denote a 5-, 6- or 7-membered cycloaliphatic ring;

R<sup>a</sup> is a bond or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkylene optionally substituted by hydroxy, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>14</sub>-aralkyl; and

Y is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkoxy or C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkynyl; C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-cycloalkyl optionally fused to one or more benzene rings and optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>14</sub>-aralkyl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>14</sub>-aralkyloxy or C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl; C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl optionally substituted by halo, hydroxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, phenoxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkylthio, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl, a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen atom, or by NR<sup>b</sup>R<sup>c</sup> where R<sup>b</sup> and R<sup>c</sup> are each independently C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl optionally substituted by hydroxy or phenyl or R<sup>b</sup> may additionally be hydrogen; phenoxy optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkoxy; a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen or oxygen atom, said heterocyclic ring being optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>14</sub>-aralkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkoxycarbonyl or by a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclyl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl; -NR<sup>d</sup>R<sup>e</sup> where R<sup>d</sup> is hydrogen or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl and R<sup>e</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl, or R<sup>e</sup> is a 4- to 10-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen or oxygen atom which ring is optionally substituted by halo-substituted phenyl or R<sup>e</sup> is C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-arylsulfonyl optionally substituted by di(C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl)amino; -SR<sup>f</sup> where R<sup>f</sup> is C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>14</sub>-aralkyl optionally substituted by halo or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-haloalkyl; or -CONHR<sup>g</sup> where R<sup>g</sup> is C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-cycloalkyl or C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aryl.

6. A compound according to claim 4, in which

X is -R<sup>1</sup>-Ar-R<sup>2</sup> or R<sup>a</sup>-Y;

Ar denotes a phenylene group optionally substituted by halo, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy or by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy substituted by phenyl;

R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> are attached to adjacent carbon atoms in Ar, and

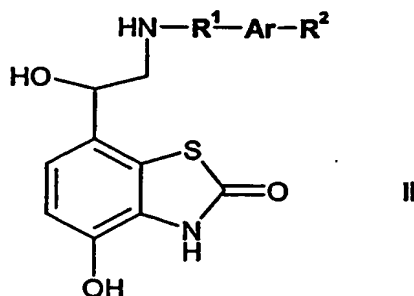
either R<sup>1</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylene and R<sup>2</sup> is hydrogen,

or R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> together with the carbon atoms in Ar to which they are attached denote a 5-, 6- or 7-membered cycloaliphatic ring, especially a 5-membered cycloaliphatic ring;

R<sup>a</sup> is a bond or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylene optionally substituted by hydroxy, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aralkyl; and

Y is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy or C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkynyl; C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-cycloalkyl optionally fused to one or more benzene rings and optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-cycloalkyl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aralkyl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aralkyloxy or C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl; C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl optionally substituted by halo, hydroxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, phenoxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylthio, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl, a 4- to 8-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen atom, or by NR<sup>b</sup>R<sup>c</sup> where R<sup>b</sup> and R<sup>c</sup> are each independently C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl optionally substituted by hydroxy or phenyl or R<sup>b</sup> may additionally be hydrogen; phenoxy optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy; a 4- to 8-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen or oxygen atom, said heterocyclic ring being optionally substituted by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl, C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aralkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxycarbonyl or by a 4- to 8-membered heterocycl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl; -NR<sup>d</sup>R<sup>e</sup> where R<sup>d</sup> is hydrogen or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl and R<sup>e</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, or R<sup>e</sup> is a 4- to 8-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one ring nitrogen or sulphur atom which ring is optionally substituted by halo-substituted phenyl or R<sup>e</sup> is C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-arylsulfonyl optionally substituted by di(C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl)amino; -SR<sup>f</sup> where R<sup>f</sup> is C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-aralkyl optionally substituted by halo or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-haloalkyl; or -CONHR<sup>g</sup> where R<sup>g</sup> is C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-cycloalkyl or C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-aryl.

7. A compound according to claim 1 that is also a compound of formula II

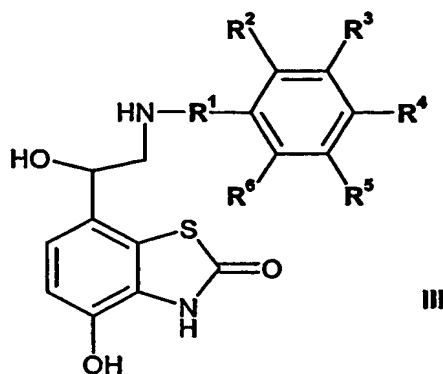


in free or salt or solvate form, where

Ar denotes a phenylene group optionally substituted by one or more substituents selected from halogen, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-alkoxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-alkoxy-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-alkyl, or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-alkoxy substituted by phenyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-alkyl-substituted phenyl or by C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-alkoxy-substituted phenyl,

$R^1$  and  $R^2$  are attached to adjacent carbon atoms in Ar, and either  $R^1$  is  $C_1$ - $C_8$ -alkylene and  $R^2$  is hydrogen,  $C_1$ - $C_8$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_8$ -alkoxy or halogen or  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  together with the carbon atoms in Ar to which they are attached denote a 5-, 6- or 7-membered cycloaliphatic ring.

8. A compound according to claim 7 that is also a compound of formula III



in free or salt or solvate form, where  $R^1$  is  $C_2$ - $C_4$ -alkylene and  $R^2$  is hydrogen, or  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached on the indicated benzene ring denote a 5-membered cycloaliphatic ring,  $R^3$  and  $R^6$  are each hydrogen,  $R^4$  is hydrogen,  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkoxy or  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkoxy substituted by phenyl and  $R^5$  is hydrogen or  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl.

9. A compound of formula I as defined in claim 1, substantially as described in any one of the foregoing Examples.

10. A compound according to any preceding claim for use as a pharmaceutical.

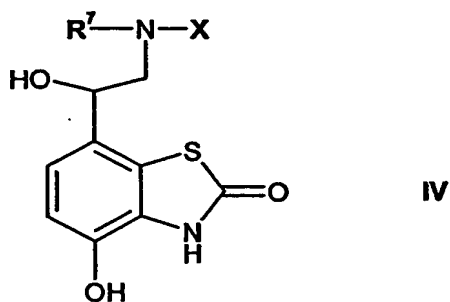
11. A pharmaceutical composition comprising as active ingredient a compound according to any one of claims 1 to 9, optionally together with a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier therefor.

12. Use of a compound according to any one of claims 1 to 9 for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of a condition which is prevented or alleviated by activation of the  $\beta_2$ -adrenoreceptor.

13. Use of a compound according to any one of claims 1 to 9 for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of an obstructive or inflammatory airways disease.

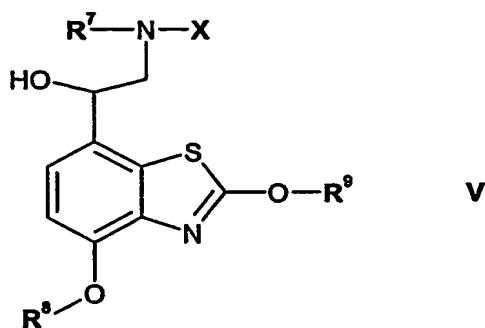
14. A process for the preparation of a compound of formula I as claimed in claim 1 which comprises:

(i) either (A) reacting a compound of formula IV



where X is as defined in Claim 1 and R<sup>7</sup> denotes a protecting group, to replace R<sup>7</sup> by hydrogen,

or (B) reacting a compound of formula V



where X and R<sup>7</sup> are as hereinbefore defined and R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup> each independently denote a protecting group, to convert groups R<sup>7</sup>, R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup> to hydrogen; and

(ii) recovering the compound of formula I in free or salt or solvate form.